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## Minutes, Arts & Sciences Student Life Committee Meeting, Tuesday, April 15, 2014

Arts & Sciences Student Life Committee

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## Student Life Committee Minutes

April 15, 2014

### Attendees

Members: Alice Davidson, Alex Grimm, Gianna Hernandez, Emmanuel Kodzi, Heidi Limongi, P. Edward Leffler, Zeynep Teymuroglu, Yusheng Yao, Scott Rubarth

Guests: Mamta Accapadi, Stephanie Briganty, Maeghan Rempala, Diane Willingham

1. Meeting was called to order at 12:36pm. Minutes from March 25 were approved.
2. Update from VPSA on reorganization Process.
  - Mamta Acapadi presented the outcome of broad consultations with faculty, students and staff on the general process and philosophy of the reorganization of Student Affairs units. Concerns had been expressed about uncoordinated programming for students. One of the emerging priorities from the consultation was to achieve alignment in Community programming among OSIL, Community Engagement, and OMA, and Student Media. The second area of alignment is the Ethos of Care, which includes Student Success, Community Standards, Disability Services, Residential Life, and International Students Services - all these support students in different phases of transition. The third alignment area was affirmed by the Career Life Planning Report, which recommended that Career Services, Academic Internships and Student Employment be coordinated to maximize our support of students' career development. The three main alignment areas will be headed by Assistant Vice Presidents in their existing functional areas. Based on the escalation of student health issues, and on view that we need to proactively focus on student wellbeing, Student Wellness has a new direct reporting structure. International Programs also has a direct reporting structure. The adjustments are aimed at creating an agile organization and minimizing barriers of service to students. Through these changes, Student Affairs has cut 4 positions, and exceeded the 3% budget reduction.
  - Yusheng Yao asked about the "moderate raise of salary" for the new positions. Mamta said the increases were commensurate with expanded roles, and were within a 10% raise in the existing staff salaries.
  - Ed Leffler asked whether there would be a merit pay system for staff. Mamta said those determinations happen with Budget Planning. *EL:* question about how the Student Life Committee is being integrated into the new structure. *MA:* the community needs to be kept informed and engaged using the representation existing on the SLC. *EL:* question about how offices on campus might change with the new reporting structure. *MA:* Residential Life currently reports to Dean of students. We should have a clear more strategic and data-driven approach to student retention and avoid duplicating efforts.
  - Emmanuel Kodzi asked a follow up question about whether Student Affairs had a clear sense of what the main student retention issues were. *MA:* there are problems with the collection, availability, and analyses of data. However there is anecdotal evidence pointing to problems such as patterns of drug use or other critical wellness events. Zeynep Teymuroglu offered to help resolve the data gathering issues.

3. Presentation of Proposal for revised Code of Conduct – Office of Community Standards and Responsibility

- Diane Willingham gave the background to how Prof. Peter Lake (Stetson University) reviewed the College's existing code (processes and procedures). He found no major issues with policies in the code but recommended that we move to a less formal, more relationship-based model of using educational conferences instead of hearings to address minor behavioral or conduct issues.
- Maeghan Rempala requested that the team be allowed to make changes to the process and the code language during the summer outside the regular amendment procedures, and report back to the SLC in the Fall. They plan to assess the new processes and make further adjustments after a year. This shift focuses not only on students who violate the policies but also rewards those who make good choices.
- Diane: Prof. Lake's review did point out things needing change, including the cessation of hearing panels, which were said to be no longer a best practice. Staff officers who have the training are to sit on these panels to avoid possible liability, and to steer students away from feeling they are going on trial.
- Stephanie Briganty presented a model that incorporates language with a more "educational" rather than "court-like" tone: e.g. "*conduct educators*" instead of "*hearing officers*", or "*learning action plan*" instead of "*sanctions*". Parents can get involved and the goal is to increase student accountability.
- Alice Davidson asked for clarification on the severity of cases and the potential harm to others. For example, where there is a sexual assault case, how would the victims feel about the perpetrators attending an educational conference with a review rather than sanctions? *DW*: recommendation is not to completely eliminate the Jury Process but reserve educational conferences for minor offences like alcohol or noise violations. Have a way to escalate to a hearing process if the offense severe.
- Alex Grimm supported the notion of incentives for good behavior, but asked for clarification on the composition of professional hearing panels, and what kinds of liability these panels would be exposed to. The concern was about how students would feel if their voice was excluded from the panels. *DW*: concerns exist about confidentiality in addition to training and experience.
- Gianna Hernandez asked a follow up question about what not on the panel. *DW*: involve students in the review and self-assessment process, and in recommending what kinds of incentives to include for good behavior.
- Heidi Limongi asked how students go through sanctions in terms of their relationship to the College. For example, can students help out in Facilities? Also, can pre-law students obtain academic credit for helping with the process? *DW*: Learning action plans will be more collaborative than sanctions. The current shift is from a more legal approach so there will be the opportunity for student involvement regardless of their major. *MR*: the framework already exists for students to be involved even with the changes.
- Emmanuel Kodzi drew attention to the value in direct student and faculty involvement in the process and encouraged the team to be careful not to lose those positives in the changes.
- Ed Leffler asked in terms of data collection, whether feedback has been collated from students who have gone through the hearing process. *DW*: reports from quantitative data

are generated easily; qualitative data mainly focuses on whether the students think the process was fair. Assessment over the last 3-4 years has shown consistency. *EL*: we need to do a better job of informing current students about policies in the College.

- Gianna Hernandez asked about the team will ensure that the involvement of parents is constructive, especially when the family relationships are tense. *DW*: redirect the conversation with parents so they know we share their concerns, so they don't just blame everyone else for the student's behavior
- Alex Grimm requested the team to present this proposal with the changes over the summer to SGA.
- Ed Leffler presented policy recommendations from the SGA: revisit common area alcohol policy; rapid consumption methods; and use of evidence from empty bottles (or evidence in a trash can). Create a situation where peer pressure is positive. *DW*: the policy can be discussed but it is important to consider the "messaging" embedded in behavior. *EK*: retention may be impacted if the environment appears supportive of less positive and unhealthy choices. *EL*: increase the campus visibility of collaboration between Residential Life and Community Standards; the perceived lack of oversight is troubling. *DW*: students are not comfortable reporting because of the potential social suicide, and the proposed changes allow the student to be called in for a discussion without a formal report.
- Yusheng Yao called for a vote to give the team the permission to make revisions on the code for framework on process and language, and to return in the Fall to present the revision. Passed.

#### 4. Approval of SHIP guidelines and form

- Yusheng Yao made a friendly amendment on page 5. Ed moved for the vote. The new SHIP passed.

#### 5. Chair of SLC

- Yusheng indicated that of the two eligible members, Scott Rubarth would not accept the position. Alice indicated her preference not to vote until we had consulted Derrick, and further that we did not have a quorum. Yusheng said he would send out an email for members to vote online. Ed recommended that we create a Vice-Chair position for a student member.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45pm

Recorded by Emmanuel Kodzi